

# Hearing Conservation Program Lesson Guide #2



# OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this topic, you will be able to:

- Identify the Navy's hearing conservation program.
- Define noise hazards and describe how they are identified.
- Describe the various types of hearing protection used by the Navy.
- Describe hearing test requirements.

# Background

- Hearing Loss
  - Exposure to high levels of continuous noise or sudden, impact noise can cause permanent hearing loss.
  - Hearing loss is preventable.
  - The Navy's program is designed to "*conserve*" hearing.

# NAVY Hearing Conservation Program



*The goal of the  
Navy's hearing  
conservation  
program:  
Prevention through  
Education &*

# Goals ( continued ) :

- Prevent occupational hearing loss and ensure auditory fitness for duty in the military and civilian workforce.
- Prevent noise exposure that has been recognized as an occupational hazard related to certain trades or operations.
- Preventing hearing loss has been and continues to be a source of concern within the Navy.

# Program Elements

- Work environments shall be surveyed to identify potentially hazardous noise levels and personnel at risk.
- Environments that contain or equipment that produces potentially hazardous noise shall be modified to reduce the noise level to acceptable levels, if feasible.

# Program Elements

( continued ) :

- Periodic hearing testing shall be conducted to monitor the effectiveness of the Hearing Conservation Program.
- Education is vital to the overall success of a Hearing Conservation Program.



# The Navy's Responsibilities

- BUMED centrally manages the Hearing Conservation Program.
- Echelon 2 Headquarters shall provide technical assistance and engineering guidance to commands.
- CNET shall incorporate hearing conservation and engineering control guidance into all appropriate training curriculum.

# The Navy's Responsibilities

- Commanding Officers Shall Ensure :
  - **All Navy areas, work sites and equipment under their cognizance identified as noise hazardous are labeled.**
  - **A hearing monitoring program and a roster maintained on personnel placed in the program is instituted.**
  - **Hazardous noise levels are eliminated or reduced through the use of engineering controls.**
  - **Personal hearing protective devices are provided.**

# **The Navy's Responsibilities**

- Commanding Officer's Shall Ensure:  
All military and and civilian personnel whose duties entail exposure to potentially hazardous noise, receive instruction regarding:
  - the Command Hearing Conservation Program.
  - The undesirable effects of noise.
  - The necessity of periodic hearing testing.
  - Off-duty practices which will aid in protecting hearing

# The Navy's Responsibilities

- Commanding Officers Shall Ensure:
  - All Military and Civilian personnel receive instruction regarding
    - **The individual's responsibility in protecting their hearing.**
    - **How hearing loss affects employability / retention, job performance and career progression.**

# The Bottom Line



- Leadership by example is the key to ensuring that personnel utilize hearing protection devices.

# Permissible Exposure Limits ( *PEL's* )

84 decibels on the “A” weighted  
network    *O r*        84 d B A

*“A” weighted* means the  
frequencies and sound levels  
measured are those experienced  
by humans, so the meter *“hears”*  
similar to the way your ears hear.

# PEL's ( *continued* )

- The limit for impact noise is 140 dB.
- When exposures are likely to exceed 84 dBA, personnel shall be included in the Navy's Hearing Conservation Program



# Noise Measurement

- Noise measurements are taken by an industrial hygienist, safety personnel, workplace monitors, or industrial hygiene technicians.
- Work environments with noise levels greater than 84 dBA ( *continuous or intermittent* ), or 140 dB peak sound pressure level for impact are analyzed / resurveyed within 30 days of any changes.

# Noise Measurement

*( continued )*

- Measurements taken are conducted with a microphone at a height equal to the height / location of the workers ear during normal working conditions.
- Records of noise measurements are kept for a period of 50 years.
- The measurements are taken using a sound level meter and personal dosimeters.

# Exposure Assessment

- PEL criteria shall be used to determine the degree of compliance with applicable standards.
- The designation of an area as a hazardous noise area is made by an industrial hygienist.

# Labeling of Hazardous Noise Areas & Equipment

- NAVMED 6260/2, Hazardous Noise Warning Decal
- NAVMED 6260/2A, Hazardous Noise Labels are both approved labels / decals.
- Posting of entire building is not necessary unless all areas are designated hazardous noise areas.
- Military unique equipment is excluded.

# Hearing Tests



- All military shall receive a “*reference*” audiogram.
- All civilians working in designated hazardous noise areas shall receive a reference audiogram.

# Personal Protective Hearing Devices

- Personal protective hearing devices shall be worn when working or entering in an area where operations generate noise levels of:
  - Greater than 84 dBA
  - 140 peak sound pressure level or greater.
    - **Double protection is required in areas where levels exceed 104dB.**
  - **All** personnel exposed to gunfire.

# Recordkeeping

- Hearing tests shall be recorded and be a permanent part of an employee's health record; personal noise dosimetry data must also be placed into the health record.
- All hearing tests shall be recorded on a DD 2215, Reference Audiogram or DD 2216, Hearing Conservation Data, as appropriate.
- A current roster of all the personnel in a hearing conservation program

# Noise Abatement



- Existing Hazards
  - Engineering design
  - Damping the noise
  - Acoustical enclosures
  - Isolation
  - Substitution
  - Administrative controls ( ***work schedules*** )

# Noise Abatement

- Future designs
  - Systems Engineering
  - Improved installation methods

# Review and Summary



*Don't let the sound  
pirate  
slowly steal your*

- Hazardous noise levels are a fact of life in industrial areas. The Navy program was developed to identify these noisy areas, post warnings, provide protective equipment, and routinely test our worker's hearing.